

RESEARCH AREA & SOURCE	DESCRIPTION & MAIN FINDINGS / ARGUMENTS
<p>Teacher Quality / Recruitment</p> <p><i>Educational Administration Quarterly 41,3 p. 449 - 479</i></p>	<p>Baker, B. & Cooper, B. (2005) Do Principals With Stronger Academic Backgrounds Hire Better Teachers?</p> <p>Using data from Schools and Staffing surveys in the USA the researchers set out to determine whether principals with stronger academic backgrounds (defined as having attended a more selective university as an undergraduate) hired teachers who also had stronger academic backgrounds. The premise, based on other studies was that having more teachers with strong academic backgrounds would positively affect student outcomes.</p> <p>Main Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Overall a principal who attended the most selective university was 2.3 times as likely to hire teachers who also attended highly selective universities. ● In the highest poverty quartile of schools a principal who attended the most selective university was 3.3 times as likely to hire teachers who also attended highly selective universities. ● Researchers surmise that there are other factors at work in the low poverty schools that attract academically gifted teachers
<p>Curriculum Development</p> <p><i>Paper presented at the 2007 ACSA conference</i></p>	<p>Luke, A. (2007) Why social justice and equity still matter.</p> <p>This paper compares the level of equity achieved by education systems that have what the author terms ‘cool’ or ‘hot’ curriculum climates, which he defines based on the level of interpretive / inferential work needed to work with the curriculum. Cool curriculum is defined as requiring a high level of interpretive work on the part of teachers and therefore giving teachers more freedom to adapt if to the individual contexts. The major comparison was between Finland and Ontario as examples of cool curriculum climates on the one hand and the USA and UK as examples of hot curriculum climates on the other. Level of achievement equity within the systems was based on PISA results.</p> <p>Main Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High Accountability using carrots and sticks attached to standardized testing can achieve some initial gains but these plateau very quickly ● Overall a ‘hot’ environment coupled with high accountability via standardized testing leads to a steepening of the regression curve for equity, meaning less equitable achievement distribution. ● ‘Cool’ climate education systems achieved the best results for equity of achievement ● High Quality / High Equity systems as rated by PISA were associated with: a strong societal ethos for equity; strong Early Childhood education; Diagnostic / formative evaluation of teachers; no high stakes testing; low definition curriculum documents (in Finland the Yr 1 curriculum is only 8 pages); no league tables; high level of professionalism; teacher autonomy and local curriculum development; meaningful pathways to outcomes with parity of esteem.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The author concludes that if you have a hot curriculum climate and are in the basement it can get you to the 1st floor but it will never get you to the second.
<p>Brain Research Paper presented at the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts & Letters</p>	<p>Stickel, S. (2005) Advances in Brain Research: Implications for Educators</p> <p>This paper argues that it is essential for educators and educational policy makers to keep abreast of developments in Brain Research in three areas: Brain Anatomy, Brain Development and Biocultural Diversity related to the brain. The paper summarizes some of the major recent findings in Brain Research and some of their implications for education.</p> <p>Main Arguments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learning is a complex process of rapidly changing connections and pathways involving which, how many, how loudly, and in what temporal and spatial configurations neurons are “talking” to each other. ● Development of each area of the brain must be considered in deciding what and how to teach - eg both the emotional areas (amygdala etc) and those responsible for higher order thinking. ● Periods of growth may suggest that brain maturation is key to the timing of when individuals are ready for different stages of learning and children may process information differently and different stages of brain development ● There are gender differences in brain development ● The traditional measure of what counts as intelligence is only able to predict about 15% - to 25% of an individual’s academic success. ● Strong emotions influence learning ● The theory of ‘pruning’ suggests that appropriate stimulation may be necessary at different stages of development ● The frontal lobes, which control much of reason, logic and emotional control are the last to reach maturity, perhaps as late as the early 20’s. ● Education is a critical influence on strengthening neocortical control and self-awareness, maintaining attention and managing affect. ● Students can better demonstrate knowledge and skills with several ways to both retrieve information and demonstrate their knowledge.
<p>Brain Research Sydney Morning Herald July 14, 2007</p>	<p>Sample, Ian (2007) Tests show how we remember to forget.</p> <p>This study had volunteers try to memorize 40 pairs of pictures of human faces linked to disturbing images. The participants were then placed in a brain scanner and shown only the human faces. Half were asked to try and forget the disturbing images and the other half to remember them. In a subsequent memory test 71% of those asked to remember the images still could but only 53% of those to try and forget them still could. The brain scans showed that suppression took part in two stages and was linked to specific parts of the brain.</p> <p>Main Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is possible to suppress emotionally disturbing memories quite efficiently so that they are erased from memory and unable to be retrieved ● The suppression is linked to two specific areas of the brain.

<p>Leadership / Mentoring</p> <p><i>Educational Administration Quarterly</i> 43:1, pp.101 - 137</p>	<p>Youngs, P. (2007) How Elementary Principal's Beliefs and Actions Influence New Teacher's Experiences.</p> <p>This was a set of case studies of six elementary school principals looking at how they organized induction for new teachers in their schools and how this was influenced by their beliefs and backgrounds as well as district policy. The influence on the new teachers were also documented. Methodology was qualitative, involving interviews and observations.</p> <p>Main Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New teachers were positively influenced by induction programs that focused on instruction and content pedagogy (ie not just classroom management) ● New teachers were most positively influenced when the responsibility for their induction was shared between the principal and a senior mentor colleague with curricular experience in the area the new teacher was working in ● New teacher were positively influenced by induction programs that provided specific scheduled times for mentoring, observation and substantive discussion of content pedagogy ● Induction programs not focusing on instructional issues seemed to lead to higher possibilities that new teachers would leave the school and / or the profession. ● In designing induction programs principals are strongly influenced by their background and beliefs about leadership, induction and teacher evaluation - in particular whether principals view themselves as instructional leaders or not affects their efficacy in inducting new teachers. ● Integrated professional cultures (where more experienced teachers support and mentor less experienced teachers with the support of the principal) seem to be the most supportive of new teachers.
<p>Curriculum Development</p> <p><i>The Seattle Times June 24, 2007</i></p>	<p>Shaw, Linda (2007) Set lesson plans stir controversy</p> <p>This is an article which discusses a move by some school districts in the US to use set lesson plans which teachers download from the internet. The article provides a number of viewpoints including those of teachers and district superintendents about the value or folly of restricting teacher freedom in curriculum.</p> <p>Main Arguments (on both sides):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students need consistent academic experiences ● Inconsistent curriculum is at the heart of education's problems ● Only 20% of teachers feel required lessons are in the best interests of students ● Teachers cannot differentiate within a system like this ● All agree there need to be consistent goals and expectations but it is a question of degree
<p>Curriculum Development</p>	<p>Australian Curriculum Studies Association (2004) ACSA Principles for Australian Curriculum Reform</p> <p>As the debate about creating a national curriculum in Australia heats up, the Australian Curriculum Studies Association has produced a</p>

<p>ACSA <i>Policies</i></p>	<p>paper suggesting some broad principles of curriculum reform. The paper gives a definition of what curriculum work is and the things it needs to include and then goes on to give some principles of the development process and some principles for content selection. The principles for content selection are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● is of personal, social and inherent worth and is of current and enduring value;● is broadly constructed from a balanced, defensible and explicit selection from key areas of human inquiry and endeavour;● prepares people for worthwhile paid and unpaid work as individuals and as members of society;● provides people with the necessary socially critical knowledge, understandings and skills to exercise their political rights in a democratic society;● is inclusive in its recognition of the cultural, political and economic contribution of all groups;● is based on cooperation and success rather than competition and failure;● embodies participatory, collective and empowering approaches to teaching and learning;● engages people in authentic tasks; and● promotes responsible, just and sustainable global citizenship.